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Newsmakers-----

2 Youths 'Cooked Up' Microwave Story

—When two retired Secret Service agents confirmed to national media that Richard M. Nixon might have been exposed to Soviet-beamed radiation while staying at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow 17 years ago as Vice President, Michael Gill and Richard Berke, both 17, sighed the relief of vindication. They had "broken" the story earlier in the day in Black & White, the student newspaper at Walt Whitman High School in Bethesda, Md. They said later that a lot of luck was responsible for their coup, as well as more than 50 phone calls and a lot of work—"day and night for the last week." Michael and Richard became interested several months ago in news stories that the Russians were beaming microwave radiation at the U.S. Embassy. "Mostly for the fun of it, we started calling around," Michael said. "Because we were only a high school newspaper, people didn't take us seriously; they put us off." Then, Richard said, they stumbled on one "reliable and knowledgeable source" who enabled them to write their story. Their source did prove skittish at points—the same sort of trouble their professional counterparts, Washington Post reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, encountered in their Watergate investigations. "As the story went on, he got more and more nervous as he saw we were going to do a professional job," Michael said. And the source had some advice for the boys: don't go to Moscow in the near future.



Reporters Michael Gill, left, and Richard Berke.
AP Wirephoto